/664 cont./

595 are not a criterion, although all families are monogamous. A decade ago, Manuel (p. 444) from sheer necessity, was the sole exception. Along with his first wife, he took the youthful Julia, a Halakwulup.

The oldest men and women, questioned independently of one another, were and are unanimous in the opinion that monogamy by far outweighed polygamy, and that the latter was tolerated as an exception. The two brothers Martin and Fred Lawrence repeated this verbatim and gave as the reason a few obvious circumstances. /665/ The number of adults of both sexes was more or less even. If the majority of the people had lived in polygamy, a considerable number of men would have remained unmarried, and every stranger would necessarily have noticed this. According to his natural inclination, the Fuegian man gives himself to only a single woman, and he feels that it disturbs his emotional life if he is supposed to give his love to two women at the same time. For this reason one of the wives of a polygamist will stand very low in his estimation. To say that he is economically better off [556] with a second wife, as long as his wife is still well and able to work, is a misunderstood exaggeration, for no one gathers riches and certain tasks imposed upon a man by ancient tribal customs are largely doubled if he has two wives whom he must support along with the children.

My attention was duly called to a popular erroneous manner of speaking among Indians and Whites, according to which a man is called a polygamist when he has sent his first wife away and has taken another woman in her place. Actually, these two women did not live in his hut simultaneously, but the first was superseded by the second. It happened relatively often among our natives that a husband dissolved his tie with the first wife and in her place took another as his wife (48). Monogamous

48. It is only in this sense that Lothrop (b):163 accepts the term "polygamy," for he writes: "In fact the Yahgan showed a tendency to change husbands and wives not infrequently, which we may term 'progressive polygamy'" /cited in English/.

/665 cont./

595 single marriage is, after all, the general rule among the Yamana. It has often been proved that the rare cases of polygamy are necessarily tolerated only as exceptions.

2. Polygamy

Polygamy among our Fuegians has justifiably been put down as a fact by several travelers and missionaries. This confirms my personal investigations. Some accounts apparently take pleasure in increasing the number of joint wives of a man. Thus Outes (g):55, for example, says: "The poor have two or three wives, but there are some with four, five, and even six" /translated from Spanish/ (49). To this I wish only to say that everyone knows

[556]

49. Even this view is topped by Spegazzini (a):166, namely, that it is not rare "to find some youth who has four and up to five wives" /translated from Spanish/.

there are neither poor people nor rich people among the Yamana.

More reliable accounts limit themselves to the bare statement that polygamy is permitted. In Hyades (b):1346 we read simply: "Polygamy, which custom permits, seemed nevertheless to be the exception" /translated from French/ (50). In February,

50. In another place he says (p):334: "Polygamy is permitted."

1920, Alfredo told me clearly and definitely: "While it is true that a Yamana may take a second woman along with his actual wife, the great majority of our men have always been satisfied with a single one!" Neither /666/ he nor his wife remembered a single native who had lived with three women at the same time. Relative figures are never cited, and the following communication by Bridges, dated February 14, 1871 (MM:V,138;1871), about the 21 men and youths present in Ushuaia does not fill me with confidence. He says that of these, four were bachelors, seven had one